

GOOD AFTERNOON

BILL HOUSTON – HOME TOWN : ATLANTA – MONTMORENCY COUNTY
THE ELK CAPITOL OF MI SINCE 1986
AND ON THE 45TH //
BEWTEEN GAYLORD AND ALPENA

I AM THE PRESIDENT OF THE MONTMORENCY COUNTY CONSERVATION CLUB

AND ALSO A TRUSTEE FOR THE MI KARST CONSERVANCY, VP FOR THE KIRTLSANDS WARBLER AUDUBON SOCIETY, CHAIR PERSON FOR THE COUNTY COMISSION ON AGING.

YOU HAVE IN YOUR PACKET FOR PERUSAL LATER

MCCC ELK PATCH – PROCEEDS SEND KIDS TO MUCC CAMP,
OUR HUNTER EDUCATION PROGRAMS, ETC

ELK POST CARD

THE CONSERVATION CLUB'S NEWSLETTER – SHOWING OUR ELK HUNT
HOSPITALITY TABLE

ELK COUNTRY BROCHER

MCCC ORV BROCHURE

THE RMEF (A GOOD PARTNER IN MANY PORGRAMS) & MCCC AREA MAP
THE COUNTY BUSINESS GUIDE

SHOW THE ELK FESTIVAL BUTTON AND MCCC HAT

BY 1875, THE NATIVE ELK WERE EXTINCT IN MICHIGAN – OVER HUNTING,

IN 1918, 7 WESTERN ELK WERE INTRODUCED INTO THE PIGEON RIVER AREA NEAR WOLVERINE.

THE HERD GREW TO OVER 2000 BY SOME ESTIMATES IN THE EARLY 60'S.

BY THE WINTER OF 1975, THE HERD SIZED COLLAPSED TO A LOW OF 200 ELK.

THIS COLLAPSE WAS CAUSED BY THE LOSS OF QUALITY HABITAT AND POACHING.

REDUCED POACHING LOSSES, HABITAT CONTROLS, AND SUCCESSFUL FOOD PLOT PLANTINGS BROUGHT THE HERD SIZE UP TO 850 ANIMALS BY THE EARLY 80'S.

BUT AS THE HERD GREW, PROBLEMS INCREASED WITH FOREST AND CORP DAMAGE. TO BRING THE HERD IN BETTER BALANCE WITH ITS NATURAL FOOD SUPPLIES IN COMBINATION WITH THE NEEDS OF LANDOWNERS, ELK HUNTING RESUMMED IN 1984.

ATLANTA IS AN UNINCORPORATED ENTITY IN MONTMORENCY COUNTY

IN 2012, ITS POPULATION WAS ESTIMATED TO BE 827.

THE COUNTY POPULATION IS 9,476 – ITS DENSITY IS 18 PERSONS PER SQUARE MILE

ALMOST 43% OF THE COUNTY IS PUBLIC OR STATE LAND – MACKINAW STATE FOREST AREA – EXCELLENT HABITAT FOR OUR ELK HERD

562 SQ MILES - 547 SQ MI OF LAND AND 16 SQ MILES OF WATER

THE FIRST ELK FESTIVAL WAS HELD IN 1984 - 30 PLUS YEARS.

OUR ELK FESTIVAL IS HELD THE LAST FULL WEEKEND OF SEPTEMBER EACH YEAR. A PARADE OPENS THE FESTIVITIES ON FRIDAY EVENING AND ACTIVITIES CONTINUE THROUGH TO SUNDAY AFTERNOON.

THIS FESTIVAL DRAWS 4,000 PLUS VISITORS EACH YEAR BASED ON THE NUMBER OF ELK FESTIVAL BUTTONS THAT ARE SOLD.

MANY VISITORS HAVE COME BACK YEAR AFTER YEAR.

LOCAL BUSINESSES EXPERIENCE SPIKES IN SALES FROM 11 % TO 20%.

THE LOCAL MOTELS, AREA PARKS ARE FILLED WITH VISITORS AND VENDORS FOR THIS EVENT. AREA MERCHANTS ANTICIPATE THE GROWTH IN SALES AS PART OF THEIR BUSINESS MODELS.

LOCAL GROUPS – ATLANTA SR CITIZENS, VFW, ELK COUNTRY ANIMAL SHELTER HAVE RAFFLES WHICH DRAW MANY DOLLARS INTO THESE COMMUNITY GROUPS.

VISITORS WHILE NOT AT THE FESTIVAL EXPLORE THE STATE FORESTS, FISH, CAMP, HIKE, GO BIRDING – WE ARE FINDING THAT VISITORS RETURN YEAR AFTER TO OUR AREA BECAUSE OF ITS NATURAL RESOURCES, UNIQUE FEATURES (SINK HOLES), AND EXPANDED INTEREST IN THE ENTIRE ELK RANGE.

WHERE ARE THE ELK? BEST TIME TO VIEW IS AT DAWN OR DUSK...VISIT THE FOOD PLOTS OR HIKE INTO THE OPEN FIELDS, OR JUST DRIVE AND FOLLOW THE SCENIC ROAD THROUGH THE MACKINAW STATE FOREST. YOU WILL BE SURPRISED TO FIND THAT MANY OF THE TWO TRACKS OFF THE MAIN ROADS WILL LEAD YOU TO GROUPS OF ELK – WATER, FOOD, AND BEDDING AREAS ARE ALL IMPORTANT.

YOU CAN EXPERIENCE CALLS OF THE LOONS, SANDHILL CRANES BUT NOTHING COMPARES TO THE SHRIILL BUGLING OF A BULL ELK IN THE FALL. YOU TUBE HAS SOME GREAT POSTINGS BY THE RMEF OF ELK BUGLING.

IN 2014, THE ELK HERD ESTIMATE WAS 668 ANIMALS – AIR SURVEYING, CITIZEN REPORTS, AND ACTUAL SIGHTINGS BY GROUND TECHNICIANS.

THE OPTIMUM HERD SIZE IS BETWEEN 500 AND 900 ELK.

THERE ARE USUALLY 2 HUNTING SEASONS FOR ELK....
AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER ABOUT 9 DAYS
AND
DECEMBER FOR ABOUT 8 DAYS.

30,000 ELIGIBLE MICHIGAN APPLICANTS APPLIED FOR THE TOTAL OF 100 LICENSES FOR THE 2014 ELK HUNT.

77 ELK WERE HARVESTED DURING THE 2014 HUNTS – 50 COWS AND 27 BULLS

PLANNING FOR THE ELK FESTIVAL GOES YEAR ROUND...IT CHARGES THE ATMOSPHERE IN THE REGION WITH ANTICIPATION, NEW IDEAS, AND REUNIONS WITH ONCE VISITORS WHO ARE NOW FRIENDS.

800-292-7800

THAT IS THE POACHING HOT LINE

**POACHING CASTS A NEGATIVE SHADOW
OVER ELK COUNTRY...**

**VISITORS ASK IF IT IS SAFE TO GO ELK VIEWING AFTER A
POACHING REPORT IS ANNOUNCED**

**IT IS THE GENESIS OF ANGER, FRUSTRATION,
AS IF YOU HAVE BEEN
PERSONALLY "WRONGED"**

SUMMARY OF ELK POACHING INCIDENTS:

2013 7 3 WERE SOLVED

2014 11 4 WERE SOLVED

**ELK ARE HIGHLY VULNERABLE TO POACHING BECAUSE OF
THE LARGE GEOGRAPHIC AREA IN THEY CAN BE FOUND.**

**IT IS ESTIMATED THAT TWICE AS MANY AS TWICE THE
NUMBER OF REPORTED POACHING INCIDENTS ARE
ACTUALLY REPORTED.**

ELK CAN'T DIAL 911!

**INCREASED FINES, LONG LICENSE FORFEITURES,
CONFISCATION OF FIREARMS,
WILL ALL ACT AS DETERRENTS
AND, HOPEFULLY,
PREVENT ADDITIONAL ACTS OF
ELK POACHING...**

AS AN OJIBWE CHIEF ONCE SAID...

**“We do not inherit the Earth and
its natural resources
from our ancestors.
We borrow it from our children.”**

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME THIS AFTERNOON AND
I HOPE THAT YOU AND YOUR FAMILIES
CAN VISIT THIS YEAR’S ELK FESTIVAL
DURING THE LAST FULL WEEKEND IN SEPTEMBER**